

Where is Kansas?

Use a United States map to introduce the location of Kansas. Students draw themselves inside an outline map of Kansas.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Ī recognize that Kansas is located in the center of the contiguous states
- Ī recognize that each of them is part of various groups
- Đ recognize size relationships on a map

OTHER MATERIALS

- ' Map of the United States. Highlighter and a pen or fine-tipped marker.
- ' Large pieces of craft or butcher paper, one per student. These need to be large enough for students to lie on and trace themselves. Cut one corner out to resemble the northeast corner of Kansas.
- ' Colors or markers.

TEACHER PREPARATION

- ' Cut out large pieces of paper to resemble Kansas, one per student.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Kansas became the thirty-fourth state on January 29, 1861. The state is located at the geographic center of the contiguous forty-eight states. Kansas is basically a 208 by 411 mile rectangle -- a total of 82,264 square miles. It ranks fourteenth among the fifty states in geographic size.

VOCABULARY

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| Contiguous | Touching or connected. The forty-eight states are contiguous. |
| State | One part of a larger government unit. The United States is made up of fifty states. |



ACTIVITY

- 1) Ask the class where they live. If the answers are their town or city, their home, or something similar ask if they have ever heard that they live in Kansas or the United States. Explain that even though they live in name town they also live in Kansas and in the United States.

Explain to the class that many times something small is part of something larger or that some large things are made up of many small things.

- 2) Show the class the map of the United States. Tell the class that the United States is like the bowl of fruit. Instead of being made up of pieces of fruit, it is made up of things called states.
 - ± Point out or outline some of the states to give the class a better view of this analogy.
 - ± Highlight the state of Kansas on the map, and tell the class that they live in one of these states - Kansas.
- 3) Explain that many towns make up the state of Kansas.
 - ± With a pen or marker name some towns and place dots on the map where these towns are located.
- 4) Explain to the class that one reason Kansas is a special place is because it is right in the middle of the United States. Have them look at the map to see this.
- 5) Tell the class that they're going to make pictures that show they are from Kansas. Use the large pieces of paper to have students draw themselves in Kansas.
 - ± Have each student find a partner. While one partner lies on the paper have the other partner trace around him/her. Once both have been traced on their own pieces of paper they can decorate the images to look like himself/herself.

EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

- 1) To let the class have a better idea of how many states are in the United States have five students stand up. Ask each to raise both hands above their heads and then count off all fifty fingers one by one.



- 2) Give the class an idea of how big the United States is by using the map. Plan out a pretend trip to a couple of places the class will be familiar with. Choose one place that is fairly close, like a nearby town. The second place should be fairly far away and someplace that everyone has heard of (Disney World is one example). Point out both places on the map.

First have the class plan a trip to the close place. Ask them what they should take with them (coats, lunch, etc.) Talk about what time of day they'll leave their houses and when they'll come back, that they'll sleep in their own beds tonight, etc.

Next, plan a trip to the second location. Again have the class plan what to bring (suitcases, swim suits, cooler with food, map, etc.). Talk about how long it will take to drive there, staying in hotel rooms, missing school for several days, getting someone to feed their pets, etc. Discuss the difference in weather and environment between there and Kansas. You may want to take a pretend trip. Have the students close their eyes when night comes and pretend to sleep and eat, look out the "window" to find places to eat meals, etc. to let them have a better idea of how long the trip will take.

- 3) Use a local map with the class to discuss their hometown. Maps are often available from local motels or the Chamber of Commerce.

